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HOUSE DIVIDED:

Lincoln and His Father

by

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Editor, *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant*

The Tenth Annual R. Gerald McMurtry Lecture

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LINCOLN LIBRARY AND MUSEUM

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

1987

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The tenth annual R. Gerald McMurtry Lecture
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in Fort Wayne, Indiana, on May 21, 1987.

PSYCHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS constitutes the current frontier in the study of Abraham Lincoln. In a wildly speculative book, *Patricide in the House Divided: A Psychological Interpretation of Lincoln and His Age*, George B. Forgie explained the coming of the Civil War in terms of the post-heroic generation's mixture of admiration and resentment of the Revolutionary generation. The mighty achievements of the founding fathers seemingly inhibited their heirs until a national crisis, partially provoked by Lincoln, provided Lincoln's opportunity to assume heroic stature. Although Lincoln held center stage in Forgie's drama, his father received scant attention; instead, George Washington filled the role of father and Stephen A. Douglas that of wicked brother.¹ In *Abraham Lincoln: The Quest for Immortality*, Dwight G. Anderson argued similarly but less coherently that Lincoln's "project of becoming 'God' worked itself out in both a private and a public context, against both his natural father and his political father [Washington], with the result that a personal death anxiety became transformed into a symbolic immortality both for himself and for the nation."² Expanding on Forgie's views, Anderson explained that "by aligning his personal resentments against constitutional fathers with the injustice of Negro slavery, Lincoln discovered in the Declaration of Independence a means of liberation for both himself and the slave."³ Such high-flown theorizing has provoked disbelief, bewilderment, and scorn from many scholars.⁴ Both Forgie and Anderson placed Lincoln in a complex psychodrama, casting major political figures in familial roles while slighting

the humble members of Lincoln's own family. These theories have roots in the painful relationship between Lincoln and his father, a topic that deserves more attention. At the very least, an exploration of the cause, nature, and consequences of such an estrangement should precede any effort to discover its manifestation in political metaphor.

Around 1850, as Lincoln and William H. Herndon rode in a buggy toward the courthouse in Menard County, Illinois, Lincoln spoke of his mother, praising her for his own best qualities of mind and character, crediting in turn the unknown Virginia gentleman who had fathered her. "God bless my mother;" he concluded, "all that I am or ever hope to be I owe to her."⁵ Thereby, indirectly, he passed judgment upon his own father, a man for whom he never had a single recorded word of praise.

In order to emphasize and dramatize Lincoln's ascent to greatness, some early biographers, led by Herndon, Lincoln's former law partner turned biographer, exaggerated the "stagnant, putrid pool"⁶ from which he rose, in the process characterizing his father Thomas as shiftless, inept, dull, and ignorant. Questioning surviving Kentucky pioneers, Herndon found some who doubted that Thomas could have fathered the president—or anyone else for that matter. These accounts and other recollections afford a valuable glimpse of self-serving memories, provincial superstitions, and backwoods meanness, but provide little reliable information about the real Thomas Lincoln. Robert Todd Lincoln, conscious of his role as guardian of the family honor as well as its papers, may have censored and certainly influenced the treatment of his grandfather in what he hoped might become the standard biography of his father.⁷ Despite these efforts, Woodrow Wilson wrote that Lincoln "came of the most unpromising stock on the continent, the 'poor white trash' of the South."⁸ John T. Morse gave an unflattering view of Lincoln's parents and sneered at Lincoln biographers who had

“drawn fanciful pictures of a pious frugal household, of a gallant frontiersman endowed with a long catalogue of noble qualities, and of a mother like a Madonna in the wilderness.”⁹ The rehabilitation of Thomas Lincoln required substituting fact for fancy.

Following Herndon’s lead, those who wrote about Lincoln often mingled biography and genealogy in order to seek seeds of greatness in his family. Those who rejected illegitimate forebears felt obligated to praise his parents. William E. Barton, after demolishing arguments that someone other than Thomas had fathered Abraham, concluded that Thomas “was not a great man. But he was great enough to be father of a man of outstanding greatness . . . We can not afford to hold in light regard the man who gave the world so great a son.”¹⁰ Belief in the genetic transmission of greatness infected the Lincoln literature with acrimony and nonsense.

The search for a documented Thomas Lincoln, leading Louis A. Warren to county courthouses, church records, and other contemporary documents, revealed a man more nearly typical of his time: a man who owned horses and livestock, paid his share of taxes, assembled cash and credit to acquire farmland, served the county when necessary, and maintained his standing in the local Baptist church.¹¹ Based upon records rather than recollections, a portrait of Thomas as sturdy pillar of a frontier community rather than shiftless drifter provides more solid ground for interpretation. Yet neither portrait alone will illuminate the tangled relationship of father and son. The importance of Thomas Lincoln lies less in who he was than in what his son thought about him.

Although the *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* fill nine substantial volumes, the son wrote remarkably little about his father. That little deserves careful attention. In responding to a Massachusetts man named Solomon Lincoln, interested in genealogy, Lincoln stated: “Owing to my father being left an orphan

at the age of six years, in poverty, and in a new country, he became a wholly uneducated man; which I suppose is the reason why I know so little of our family history.”¹² In 1859 and again in 1860, when called upon for biographical information for campaign purposes, Lincoln wrote that his father “grew up[,] literally without education.”¹³ In 1860, Lincoln elaborated: “He never did more in the way of writing than to bunglingly sign his own name.”¹⁴ The word “bunglingly” was gratuitous, and Lincoln neglected to mention that his father could read a little.¹⁵

Lincoln wrote: “My parents were both born in Virginia, of undistinguished families—second families, perhaps I should say.”¹⁶ Subsequent genealogical research, partisan and passionate, has accomplished little toward eroding that blunt and candid statement. Its significance lies in the equation between the two families because documentary evidence puts the Lincolns a cut above the Hankses; for example, most Lincolns but few Hankses could write their names.¹⁷ Desperate endeavors to provide Nancy Hanks with a proper father came too late since Lincoln apparently believed that his mother was born out of wedlock. In one autobiography, he wrote of her as “of a family of the name of Hanks,” but provided a full name on other occasions.¹⁸ As a boy he lived amid an extended family of his mother’s relatives, a confusing flock of Hankses and Sparrows. One of his closest boyhood associates, cousin Dennis Hanks, who later claimed, endearingly, to have “learned him his letters,” was illegitimate.¹⁹

In contrast, the Lincolns can now be traced to Samuel Lincoln, who settled at Hingham, Massachusetts, in 1637 and whose descendants pushed south and west, some amassing considerable landholdings. When Abraham Lincoln, Thomas’s father, was killed by an Indian in 1784, he owned more than 5,000 acres in Kentucky.²⁰ The early death of his father left six-year-old

Thomas “a wandering laboring boy,”²¹ and later gave his son the impression that he came from an “undistinguished” family.²² In his first political statement, Lincoln declared that he “was born and have ever remained in the most humble walks of life. I have no wealthy or popular relations to recommend me.”²³ Such antecedents benefited any Whig candidate, as Lincoln noted in calling attention to Henry Clay’s “undistinguished parents.”²⁴ Asked about his relationship to the prominent Lincoln family of Massachusetts, Lincoln replied, not entirely facetiously, that “he could not say that he ever had an ancestor older than his father.”²⁵

Just as grandfather Abraham had gone from Virginia into Kentucky in 1780 in search of larger landholdings and greater economic opportunity, other pioneers pushing westward expected to better their fortunes. By the time grandson Abraham was born in 1809, his father owned the birthplace farm, 348½ acres on Nolin Creek, paid for in cash, and may have owned additional farmland elsewhere and real estate in Elizabethtown. In addition to farming, he augmented his income by working as a carpenter. While still a young man, Thomas had reached the height of his prosperity.

The Lincolns moved to Indiana in 1816; according to Abraham, “This removal was partly on account of slavery; but chiefly on account of the difficulty of land titles in Ky.”²⁶ Thomas Lincoln had encountered lawsuits over his title to three different farms in Kentucky, suggesting adequate cause to move to Indiana, where federal surveying promised greater security in landholding. Under similar circumstances, even Daniel Boone left Kentucky. The role of slavery is more difficult to assess; only Abraham’s statement and the membership of the Lincolns in a church opposed to slavery supports this explanation, but Abraham’s statement may be discounted since it reinforced and justified his political position.²⁷

Thomas's life in Indiana, less solidly documented than that in Kentucky, indicates economic decline. The man who once purchased a hat in Elizabethtown for one pound, sixteen shillings,²⁸ now seems to have struggled to keep his head above water. Whether or not the Lincolns spent the first winter in Indiana in a three-sided cabin, a "half-faced camp," with a fire burning on the open south side, is in dispute,²⁹ as is the quality of the eighteen-by-twenty foot cabin that replaced it. In what amounted to an "unbroken forest,"³⁰ Thomas selected land about one mile from the nearest source of water.³¹ Lincoln remembered "pretty pinching times . . . at first . . . but presently we got reasonably comfortable . . ."³² After fourteen years in Indiana, Thomas sold to a neighbor the eighty acres he owned, for which he had paid \$160, along with an additional twenty acres and all his improvements, for \$125.³³

Lincoln remembered that he held an ax in his hands much of the time, "less, of course, in plowing and harvesting seasons."³⁴ Neither the schools available in the region nor his father's resources satisfied young Abe's hunger for education. When his father endorsed a note for a friend who defaulted, Abe had to leave school to work for a neighbor.³⁵ Divergent reminiscences obscure the issue of whether the father did all he could to further his son's education or instead criticized him for reading instead of working. In his autobiography, Lincoln noted that "After he was twentythree, and had separated from his father, he studied English grammar . . ."³⁶ Years later, Thomas was quoted as complaining, "I suppose that Abe is still fooling hisself with eddication. I tried to stop it, but he has got that fool idea in his head, and it can't be got out."³⁷ Dennis Hanks recalled that Abe "was lazy—a very lazy man. He was always reading, Scribbling, writing, ciphering, writing Poetry."³⁸ Indeed, Abe was a "stubborn reader, his father having sometimes to slash him for neglecting his work by reading."³⁹ A neighbor for whom Abe

worked complained that he “was always reading and thinking . . . Lincoln said to me one day that his father taught him to work but never learned him to love it.”⁴⁰ When Abe spoke out-of-turn to a passing stranger, Thomas cuffed him⁴¹ and he also interrupted Abe’s earliest speeches, which distracted others from their farm chores.⁴² Wondering whether “Abe Loved his farther Very well or Not,” Hanks concluded “I Dont think he Did.”⁴³

When Lincoln was nine years old, his mother died. Of her character, even her appearance, nothing reliable is known, and the impact of her death on her son remains matter for speculation. A few years later, in 1822, Thomas Lincoln helped to build the nearby Pigeon Creek Baptist Church, using his carpentry skills on the door and window frames, and constructing a pulpit as well. He and his new wife joined the church, which he served as trustee and committee member, and he once attended a church conference as a representative. Thomas “was one of the five or six most important men” in the congregation.⁴⁴ When taken to church by his parents, Abe would later repeat the sermon nearly verbatim, mimicking the preacher.⁴⁵ Lincoln never joined that or any other church.

At the age of eight, Lincoln shot a turkey and afterward never “pulled a trigger on any larger game.”⁴⁶ His father had moved the family to a region difficult to farm but teeming with animals, where hunting furnished a large proportion of the family food. Like many pioneers, Thomas preferred to hunt, considering farming fit for women and children. As Abe grew, his dislike of hunting created another division between father and son.

In 1819, Lincoln’s stepmother Sarah Bush Johnston brought her three children into the Lincoln cabin: two daughters and John D. Johnston, about one year younger than Abe.⁴⁷ According to the son-in-law of Dennis Hanks, who drew on family traditions, Thomas treated Abe “rather unkindly than otherwise, always appeared to think more of his stepson John D. Johnston

than he did of his own son Abraham.”⁴⁸ By all accounts, John seems to have been a conventional pioneer youngster. Reminiscing about Abe and John, Sarah Lincoln recalled that “Both were good boys, but I must say, both now being dead, that Abe was the best boy I ever saw or ever expect to see.”⁴⁹ “He and his step-brother never quarreled but once . . .”⁵⁰ Somehow Sarah seems to have given Abe the support and encouragement he should have received from his natural parent.

In 1821, one of Lincoln’s two stepsisters married, as did both the other stepsister and his sister Sarah in 1826. Abe and John were the only remaining children in the Lincoln cabin. Lincoln remembered that he and Johnston “were raised together—slept together—and loved each other like brothers.”⁵¹ In seven letters to Johnston (1848–51), Lincoln indicated repeatedly how close the two had once been, and used the word “brother” in every letter; in Lincoln’s 1860 autobiography Johnston appeared as his “stepmother’s son.”⁵² As boys, however, they cooperated in a cruel prank that killed Thomas Lincoln’s pet dog, and jointly operated a distillery.⁵³ Johnston and Lincoln stood together in a family feud with the Grigsbys, a quarrel originating in Lincoln’s belief that his sister Sarah had died in childbirth through the neglect of her husband Aaron Grigsby.⁵⁴ Lincoln wrote nasty satirical verse about the Grigsbys, but it was Johnston who received a thrashing in a fistfight with William Grigsby.⁵⁵ Later, when challenged to fight by the muscular stepbrother, the Grigsbys backed down. A neighbor recalled that “when the Lincolns were getting ready to leave [Indiana], Abraham and his step-brother . . . came over to our house to swap a horse for a yoke of oxen. John did all the talking. If any one had been asked that day which would make the greatest success in life I think the answer would have been John Johnston.”⁵⁶

Eleanor Gridley, canvassing Coles County, Illinois, in 1891 in search of Lincoln relics and reminiscences, talked to a grandson

of Mrs. Lincoln. "Grandmarm said 'that Abe wasn't considered nigh so smart as Uncle John D. Johnston, who could talk well, dress well, and go about the neighborhood of an evening.' Nuther wus he [Abe] much of hand to go among the gals 'cept to corn shuckin', and as John D. Johnston, grandmarm's son, wus right peart, she told him onct that John would cut him out with the gals; but Abe said 'that didn't bother him any,' and so the folks kept thinking that John wus the smartest of the two, 'cause he [Abe] wus allers sittin' in the house at night porin' over his books, quiet and sad like, and John could talk right smart like. At last John began to quit larnin', but Abe kept right on. . . . [G]randmarm said 'that Uncle Abe wus allers asked to all the shuckin' bees and he wus the fust one chosen, 'cause they knowed his side war shore to win, and allers after the bee wus over he had to rastle with some of the boys, or he'd tell some of his cur'us stories that wus so funny they'd make a hog laugh.'"57

Much the same impression of the differences between the two came from Mrs. Samuel Chowning. "In the spring of 1833 when I wus then a girl of only sixteen years Grandpap Lincoln as usual 'sugared off,' and John D. Johnston invited the young folks to come over some evening, when Abe Lincoln wus up to the old home. John D. Johnston sent us word that Brother Abe had come and we made up a little party. Well, John D. and Abe Lincoln took me across the river in a canoe. John had promised us young folks some taffy and purty soon he said to Grandpap Lincoln, 'I want some taffy for the girls.' You know John D. Johnston wus mighty good lookin' and awful takin' and we knowed he'd get some taffy for us. We girls didn't care much about Abraham Lincoln, though, for he wus so quiet and awkward and so awful homely, and he never made up to the girls anyhow, so none of 'em cared about asking any favors of him.'"58

Young Lincoln, often described as uninterested in girls,⁵⁹ may have been making the best of circumstances, a supposition rein-

forced by some of his early letters. In Springfield, in 1837, Lincoln reported: "I have been spoken to by but one woman since I've been here, and should not have been by her, if she could have avoided it."⁶⁰ As to marriage, "I can never be satisfied with any one who would be block-head enough to have me."⁶¹ Lincoln considered himself homely and frequently described himself as humble. If young Lincoln cared whether girls liked him, his humiliation must have increased when his stepbrother "cut him out with the gals."

In 1830, the Lincoln-Hanks clan, a party of thirteen, left Indiana for Macon County, Illinois, where Abe helped to fell trees and split rails for fencing, then settled into the cabin for the horrendous winter that followed. That spring, Lincoln went on Denton Offut's flatboat to New Orleans, then returned to his parents, who had moved to Coles County, for a brief visit before beginning work in Offut's store in New Salem. Lincoln had come of age and was leaving his parents permanently. Johnston, who had gone with Abe to New Orleans, may have tagged along to New Salem; the two were messmates during the Black Hawk War, after which Lincoln went back to New Salem, Johnston to Coles County, where he lived with or near the Lincolns for twenty years.

Thomas lived for twenty years after Abe left, years in which his son was elected to the state legislature, became a lawyer, married, started a family, and served a term in Congress. Father and son had little contact. Lincoln rarely visited his parents, no Lincoln or Hanks relatives attended the Springfield wedding⁶² or (with one exception) ever visited the Lincoln house, and the older Lincolns never met Mary Lincoln or saw their grandchildren. Beyond references by Abraham to Thomas in family letters and in autobiographical and genealogical accounts, Lincoln wrote about his father only one other time. On February 25, 1842, in a letter to his close friend Joshua Speed, commenting

on Speed's doubts that he had done the right thing by marrying, Lincoln noted that "My old Father used to have a saying that 'If you make a bad bargain, *hug* it the tighter' . . ."63

The only Lincoln relative who visited Springfield was Harriet, daughter of Dennis Hanks, who lived with the Lincolns in 1844 and 1845 while attending school. According to Herndon, Mary Lincoln treated Harriet like a servant; for her part, Harriet recalled Mary as a "Stingy" woman who "loved to put on *Style*."64 In 1851, John D. Johnston tried to place his thirteen-year-old son Abraham in the Lincoln home to enable him to get an education; Lincoln was sympathetic but Mary vetoed the proposal.65 In writing to Johnston, Lincoln misspelled the name of the son as "Abram," as if to deny that the boy had been named in his honor. Mary contributed to building barriers between Lincoln and his family, but there is little reason to believe that her husband forcefully objected.

Just when Lincoln turned twenty-one and asserted his independence, his father turned fifty-two, with his career as carpenter behind him and his living dependent on farm work difficult for a man of any age. Unsurprisingly, his fortunes steadily declined. Equally unsurprising under such circumstances, he looked more and more to a son for assistance; John D. Johnston was the only son available.

Herndon wrote that Johnston "was an indolent and shiftless man, a man that was 'born tired,' and yet he was an exceedingly clever man, generous, and very hospitable."66 Oddly enough, Herndon and others described Thomas Lincoln in similar fashion. One visitor called him the "cleverest homespun man I ever saw—could tell more good anecdotes than 'Abe.'"67 Just as Thomas appeared most promising as a young man, so too did Johnston. "John D. Johnston is remembered by the early settlers of Coles County, Ill., as a foppishly dressed young constable, who made his nice clothes conspicuous in the vicinity of the

abandoned town site of Richmond, three miles southwest of Mattoon. John Cunningham, one of the older residents of Coles County, says of him: 'He was the Beau Brummel of Goose Nest Prairie, and would sport the best clothes to be had, regardless of whether they were ever paid or not. . . . [T]he term shiftless fitted him in respect to his having no particular occupation. He was always prepared to make a pleasing address, and was smart for a young man of those days, but without other education than that acquired by contact with others. Some persons thought him a brighter man than the immortal Lincoln. Had Johnston lived in this age, he would have filled the niche of the dude to perfection.'"⁶⁸ Another old neighbor remembered Johnston as "profligate and dissipated."⁶⁹

Because Lincoln so rarely visited his parents, who were illiterate, he usually communicated with them through Johnston; as Thomas Lincoln aged, he depended more on Johnston for assistance in managing his business affairs. To ensure that his father would never be landless, Lincoln bought forty acres for \$200 from Thomas in 1841, deeded the land to him for life, and promised it to Johnston for the same sum thereafter.⁷⁰ In 1848, Lincoln answered jointly a request from his father for \$20 and from Johnston for \$80. Thomas got his money, necessary to save his land from sale to satisfy a judgment, but not without a gentle scolding about his carelessness in financial matters. Johnston received nothing, although Lincoln mentioned having sent him money previously. Lincoln asserted that Johnston's need arose "by some defect in your *conduct*. . . . [Y]ou *are* an *idler*. I doubt whether since I saw you, you have done a good whole day's work, in any one day."⁷¹ Lincoln then offered to match, dollar for dollar, all money Johnston could earn in Coles County for the next four or five months. The letter closed "Affectionately Your brother," but it was probably too late to repair the damage. In corresponding with his Coles County relative Lincoln used a condescending and sanctimonious tone absent elsewhere.

Johnston had, moreover, led Lincoln's father into business deals and land transactions that sometimes ended in the courts.⁷² Johnston's idleness, financial distress, and early death apparently stemmed from heavy drinking.⁷³ Dennis Hanks had the last word on Lincoln and Johnston. "I think Abe done more for John than he deserved. John thought that Abe did not do enough for the old people. They became enemies a while on this ground. I don't want to tell all the things that I know: it would not look well in history. I say this: Abe treated John well. . . . A kinder harted man never was in Coles County, Ill nor an honest man. I dont say this because he was my brother in law: I say it, noing it. John did not love to work any of the best. I plagued him for not working."⁷⁴

Over the years, Thomas changed from a rising young Kentucky farmer to the pathetic failure of Goosenest Prairie, becoming troublesome and embarrassing to his son. Money sent to Thomas might just as well have been sent to Johnston, whose finances were intermingled with those of his stepfather and whose hold over the old man gave him access to all his resources. Lincoln's continued ownership of the homestead guaranteed that his parents would not show up destitute in Springfield and that political opponents could not capitalize on their poverty.

In the last decade of his father's life, Lincoln assigned some Coles County legal fees to Thomas to collect, adding up to no great sum. When Thomas tried to sell one for fifteen dollars, he was unable to do so.⁷⁵ In 1845, when Lincoln left a thirty-five dollar fee for Thomas to collect in Charleston, Johnston signed his stepfather's name to the receipts.⁷⁶ Even accepting reminiscences that Lincoln gave his parents ten or fifteen dollars every time he visited them, the total of Lincoln's support remains small. Despite Lincoln's concern for his stepmother's welfare after his father's death, she received no documented gifts of cash prior to 1864.

As a young man, Lincoln acquired debts from his New Salem

store venture—he called it the national debt—that he paid off steadily for many years. Although the Lincolns lived simply in Springfield, by the late 1840s they could afford a servant, and Lincoln's income from the law for that decade is estimated at \$1,500 to \$2,000 yearly at a time when the governor could live comfortably on \$1,200.⁷⁷ Lincoln could have given his parents more money than he did. Except for meager handouts when he visited his parents, Lincoln probably ceased his support about 1848, just when his finances improved.

In May, 1849, Lincoln heard from cousin Dennis Hanks's son-in-law and Johnston that Thomas was desperately ill and "anxious to See you before He dies & I am told that His Cries for you for the last few days are truly Heart-Rendering. . . . He craves to see you all the time . . . his only Child that is of his own flush & blood."⁷⁸ Thomas soon recovered, perhaps before his son could respond. In early 1851, Thomas again fell ill. On January 12, 1851, Lincoln answered two letters from Johnston and one from the daughter of Dennis Hanks, all through a single letter to Johnston. Lincoln wrote belatedly, he explained, "[n]o[t because] I have forgotten them, or been uninterested about them—but because it appeared to me I could write nothing which could do any good." "My business is such that I could hardly leave home now," he added, "if it were not, as it is, that my own wife is sick-abed. (It is a case of baby-sickness, and I suppose is not dangerous.)" The third Lincoln son, William Wallace Lincoln, had been born on December 21, 1850; there is no reason to believe that Mary Lincoln had an especially difficult recovery. Using his wife's illness as an excuse, then adding that it was not a serious matter, might well entitle him to be called "Honest Abe." Worse followed. "I sincerely hope Father may yet recover his health; but at all events tell him to remember to call upon, and confide in, our great, and good, and merciful Maker; who will not turn away from him in any extremity.

He notes the fall of a sparrow, and numbers the hairs of our heads; and He will not forget the dying man, who puts his trust in Him. Say to him that if we could meet now, it is doubtful whether it would not be more painful than pleasant; but that if it be his lot to go now, he will soon have a joyous [meeting] with many loved ones gone before; and where [the rest] of us, through the help of God, hope ere-long [to join] them.”⁷⁹

These words of religious consolation, sometimes quoted out of context as evidence of genuine concern and compassion, might well be read more perceptively as indicating alienation. After all, Thomas had a Bible and people to read it to him; what he lacked was a visit from his only surviving child. In selecting for his Biblical text “the fall of a sparrow,” Lincoln evoked one of his mother’s maiden names and perhaps some of the gossip concerning her character. While danger exists, of course, of reading too much into this letter, recently characterized as “morally . . . dubious and hypocritical,”⁸⁰ certain aspects exist on the surface: Lincoln did not immediately answer two letters from Johnston about the impending death of his father; he offered two weak excuses for not visiting the dying man and wondered whether a visit “would not be more painful than pleasant”; and he urged his father to call upon God, “who will not turn away from him in any extremity” rather than his son, who did turn away.

Thomas died five days after the date of Lincoln’s letter to Johnston. Lincoln did not attend the funeral and there is no clear evidence that he visited his Coles County relatives during the next decade. “I saw him every year or two,” Sarah Lincoln said in 1865, not specifying whether the visits continued after her husband’s death.⁸¹ Lincoln probably did not see his father’s grave until January 31, 1861, when he visited his stepmother for the last time.

The death of Thomas Lincoln in 1851 apparently closed a sad chapter in his son’s life. Abraham continued to take an interest

in the welfare of his stepmother. During the following summer he relinquished to Johnston without requesting payment the eighty acres he inherited from his father, presumably because Johnston promised to take care of Sarah Lincoln.⁸² In November, however, learning about Johnston's plans to sell his land and move to Missouri, Lincoln wrote Johnston a series of stinging letters. "If you intend to go to work, there is no better place than right where you are; if you do not intend to go to work, you can not get along any where. Squirring & crawling about from place to place can do no good. . . . [P]art with the land you have, and my life upon it, you will never after, own a spot big enough to bury you in."⁸³ Lincoln then urged Johnston not to misunderstand the letter, not written "in any unkindness." Lincoln wrote it, he stated, to get Johnston "to *face* the truth—which truth is, you are destitute because you have *idled* away all your time."⁸⁴

In writing to Johnston, Lincoln complained vehemently that current plans for selling the Lincoln land would bring \$200 to his stepmother, which, invested at 8 percent, would yield sixteen dollars per year. Lincoln objected because Johnston planned to take \$100 for himself; left with Mrs. Lincoln, her income would rise to \$24 yearly. "I can not, to oblige any living person, consent that she shall be put on an allowance of sixteen dollars a year."⁸⁵

In 1852, Johnston, by now adept at manipulating his relatives, did get away to Arkansas with cash from the sale of land and more from the sale of land owned by his second wife, and by the summer of 1852 wrote a boastful letter about his prospects.⁸⁶ Little more than one year later he was back in Coles County and penniless; a few months later he was dead at the age of forty-four, leaving personal property valued at \$55.90⁸⁷ and, probably, as Lincoln had predicted, owning no land to be buried in.

In a letter to Johnston of November, 1851, Lincoln had added "A word for Mother" urging her to live with her granddaughter (the former Harriet Hanks) and husband, Augustus H. Chapman.⁸⁸ Following Thomas's death, Mrs. Lincoln lived with friends and relatives, though apparently she spent most time in the Lincoln cabin on Goosenest Prairie. Accounting for her whereabouts in the 1850s presents difficulties; the impression arises that nobody in Springfield knew or much cared where she lived.

On April 5, 1864, Dennis Hanks wrote to Lincoln to acknowledge his "Little Check for 50.00." When he "shoed it to mother She cried Like a Child." Hanks added: "She is Mity Childish heep of truble to us."⁸⁹ His opinion of Lincoln's generosity appeared in the phrase "Little Check" and if such checks had arrived more frequently they might have evoked fewer tears. Another relative wrote that Dennis kept the money anyway, never took care of Mrs. Lincoln, and "threatened to put her on the county."⁹⁰ Hanks became an appropriate successor to Johnston as caretaker of Lincoln's parents.

By all accounts, Thomas's grave remained inadequately marked; reminiscent accounts of Lincoln in 1861 whittling the initials "T. L." on a board and sticking it into the ground hardly enhance the image of filial devotion.⁹¹ Lincoln may have intended to provide a tombstone, but the evidence comes from a letter written by Mary Lincoln to Lincoln's stepmother in late 1867. "My husband a few weeks before his death mentioned to me, that he intended *that* summer, paying proper respect to *his* father's grave, by a head & foot stone, with his name, age && and I propose very soon carrying out his intentions. It was not from want of affection for his father, as you are well aware, that it was not done, but *his* time was so greatly occupied always."⁹² Mary Lincoln followed her husband's lead by neglecting the grave, which remained unmarked until 1880, when a local effort

to raise money for a monument attracted the attention of Robert Todd Lincoln, who then made a generous contribution.⁹³ Robert also helped to provide a tombstone for Nancy Hanks Lincoln, another grave his father had intended to mark.⁹⁴

Was Mary Lincoln merely polite and tactful in writing of her husband's intention to mark his father's grave? Possibly; yet it is doubtful that Lincoln could have put his father entirely out of his mind. The fourth Lincoln son, born on April 4, 1853, was named for his grandfather, although Abraham never mentioned it. Johnston had named his firstborn for Thomas in 1837.

Biographers discussing Lincoln's coolness toward his father have frequently followed Herndon's lead by explaining the problem in terms of Thomas Lincoln's failings. Herndon knew Lincoln well, but admitted that "there was something about his origin he never cared to dwell upon."⁹⁵ After Lincoln's death, Herndon spent years dwelling upon what Lincoln concealed, often at the expense of members of the Lincoln family. Oddly enough, when Herndon first published the letter Lincoln wrote as his father was dying, Herndon thought that he had established Lincoln's belief in immortality, and Herndon's foremost disciple claimed that the letter "forever dispels the imputation that [Lincoln] was callous or indifferent to the needs of his father."⁹⁶

In order to understand the relationship between father and son, no denigration of Thomas is necessary. "Happiness was the end of life with him," John Hanks concluded; "a man who took the world easy," wrote Dennis Hanks, who knew "No Better Man than Old Tom Lincoln."⁹⁷ Abe's ambitions exceeded his father's expectations and could not be fulfilled under his father's roof. If young Abe had been neglected or mistreated by his father, the explanation may depend more upon Thomas's poverty than his ill-will. Far more important is the matter of Thomas's favoritism toward his stepson. When Abe left the family cabin,

Johnston did fill the role of dutiful son, however defectively. Lincoln's early closeness to his stepbrother indicates that rivalry either did not exist when they lived together or existed within manageable limits.

Lincoln's word "painful" in dismissing a visit to his dying father may be the best word for their relationship in the last years of Thomas's life. Such a relationship must have had roots in Lincoln's childhood but deteriorated so dramatically over time that in 1851 Lincoln neglected his filial duties to visit his dying father, to attend his funeral, and to mark his grave. According to Mary Lincoln, the last of these obligations remained on his mind in 1865. He was, after all, still the only member of the family able to afford a decent stone.

To what extent this painful relationship with his father influenced his career cannot be accurately ascertained; any venture toward answering the question must be speculative. Unlike speculations that put Lincoln in the midst of a political psychodrama, however, these arise from Lincoln's relationship with a figure of great personal significance in his life.

From 1854 through 1860, virtually all Lincoln's public speaking involved discussion of the extension of slavery into the territories. He repeatedly invoked "our Revolutionary fathers" and insisted that nothing could resolve the issue other than "a return to the policy of the fathers."⁹⁸

For what he believed would be the most important speech of his life he chose the biblical metaphor of the house divided and repeated the phrase throughout the 1858 campaign against Douglas. Urged by political associates to drop the house divided metaphor as extreme and inaccurate, Lincoln stood his ground, suggesting that the words held special meaning for him.⁹⁹ In the debates, Douglas repeatedly attacked the house divided doctrine, asserting that the division had existed for eighty-two years without causing collapse before Lincoln and the Republicans

insisted on uniformity.¹⁰⁰ In defense, Lincoln repeatedly quoted the entire passage in his speech in which he provided a qualified context for his metaphor.¹⁰¹

Lincoln's battle against the house divided led eventually to the war for the Union, and again he portrayed the central issue in familial terms. For secessionists, he charged, "the Union, as a family relation, would not be anything like a regular marriage at all, but rather a sort of free-love arrangement, to be maintained on what that sect calls passionate attraction."¹⁰² In his inaugural address, he used the image of divorce, declaring it impossible because "[p]hysically speaking, we cannot separate."¹⁰³ His task, he said less formally, was to "keep house." "The present moment finds me at the White House," he told Ohio troops in 1864, "yet there is as good a chance for your children as there was for my father's."¹⁰⁴

Examples could be multiplied, but with misleading effect if they paint a portrait of Lincoln obsessed with fathers and families. The significance of metaphor should be kept within bounds. Explanations of Lincoln's politics that emphasize family conflict assume that resulting tensions were unrecognized or unconscious.¹⁰⁵ On the contrary, Lincoln's words and acts demonstrate his awareness of family estrangement, nowhere more clearly than in letters to his one-time brother. A campaign visit to Indiana in 1844 took Lincoln to the site where his "mother and only sister were buried," and inspired him to write poetry still incomplete many months later.

My childhood's home I see again,
And sadden with the view;
And still, as memory crowds my brain,
There's pleasure in it too.¹⁰⁶

Lincoln's pain represented private sorrow rather than unconscious motivation.

The "chequered past" arose again in poetic form during the Civil War when Lincoln wrote to a noted actor of his admira-

tion for the soliloquy of Claudius in *Hamlet* beginning "O my offence is rank."¹⁰⁷ The offence: "a brother's murder." Lincoln recited this soliloquy from memory in 1864, then recited the opening lines of *Richard III* in which Richard, proclaiming his ugliness, resolves to plot against his brother.¹⁰⁸ On several occasions, Lincoln spoke of Shakespearian plays, scenes, or speeches that held special meaning for him, predominately tragedies involving family conflict and the death of kings, legitimacy and usurpation.¹⁰⁹ Lincoln had studied some of the plays "perhaps as frequently as any unprofessional reader."¹¹⁰ To interpret Lincoln's interest in Shakespeare solely in terms of public figures and events of the Civil War is to ignore Lincoln's painful relationships with his own father and brother, unresolved at the time of their deaths, and to forget that Lincoln began to read Shakespeare intently as a boy in Indiana and continued to do so in Illinois. Wartime events expanded the meaning of these dramas of family conflict for Lincoln without eliminating their original personal and emotional connections.

The first house divided is the cabin in Indiana to which Thomas brought his second wife and her three children. Abe's new mother treated him with exemplary kindness, and his stepbrother became his closest friend; nonetheless alienation developed between father and son. In later years, as Johnston became closely involved with Thomas's affairs and more like him in character and conduct, Lincoln wrote him stinging letters of rebuke, and Lincoln's letter written as his father lay dying reflected old antagonisms. Such powerful emotions did not dissipate after Thomas's death in 1851 or Johnston's death in 1854 but reappeared as metaphor in Lincoln's utterances during the controversy over the extension of slavery and accompanied him from Springfield to Washington. Family relationships so strongly shaped his life and thought that it is impossible to understand this melancholy man without knowing the unhappy boy.

NOTES

1. George B. Forgie, *Patricide in the House Divided: A Psychological Interpretation of Lincoln and His Age* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1979).

2. Dwight G. Anderson, *Abraham Lincoln: The Quest for Immortality* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982), 79.

3. *Ibid.*, 7.

4. See Richard O. Curry, "Conscious or Subconscious Caesarism?: A Critique of Recent Scholarly Attempts to Put Abraham Lincoln on the Analyst's Couch," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* LXXVII (Spring 1984): 67-71; Major L. Wilson, "Lincoln and Van Buren in the Steps of the Fathers: Another Look at the Lyceum Address," *Civil War History* 29 (Sept. 1983): 197-211; Richard N. Current, "Lincoln After 175 Years: The Myth of the Jealous Son," *Papers of the Abraham Lincoln Association* VI (1984): 15-24.

5. William H. Herndon and Jesse William Weik, *Herndon's Lincoln: The True Story of a Great Life* (Chicago, New York, and San Francisco: Belford, Clarke & Company, 1889), 1:3-4. Many years earlier, Herndon had shared with other biographers Lincoln's tribute to his mother. See J. G. Holland, *The Life of Abraham Lincoln* (Springfield, Mass.: Gurdon Bill, 1866), 23; Isaac N. Arnold, *The History of Abraham Lincoln, and the Overthrow of Slavery* (Chicago: Clarke & Co., 1866), 69; [Louis A. Warren], "The Lincoln Mother Controversy," *Lincoln Lore* 832 (March 19, 1945). Herndon also placed the incident when Lincoln spoke of his mother's illegitimacy about 1851 and about 1852. Herndon to Ward Hill Lamon, 25 Feb. and 6 March, 1870, Emanuel Hertz, *The Hidden Lincoln: From the Letters and Papers of William H. Herndon* (New York: The Viking Press, 1938), 63, 73-74. Herndon also wrote that upon receiving news of his father's death, Lincoln praised his mother. *Herndon's Lincoln*, 1:13. Since that event (17 Jan. 1851) occurred about the middle of Herndon's recollected dates for Lincoln's other tribute to his mother, the two might be the same. The incident is undated in Herndon to Jesse W. Weik, 19 June 1887, Herndon-Weik Collection, Library of Congress. Herndon's undated manuscript "Lincoln in Ky." (*ibid.*) places the tribute to Lincoln's mother (without allusion to her illegitimacy) in 1846.

Available evidence indicates that Lincoln spoke of his mother's illegitimacy only to Herndon, but in 1860 John Locke Scripps of the *Chicago Tribune* interviewed Lincoln in order to prepare a campaign biography. In later correspondence, Scripps revealed that "Mr. Lincoln communicated some facts to me concerning his ancestry which he did not wish to have published, and which I have never spoken of or alluded to before. I do not think, however, that Dennis Hanks, if he knows anything about these matters, would be very likely to say anything about them." Scripps to William H. Herndon, 24 June 1865, Scripps, *Life of Abraham Lincoln*, Roy P. Basler and Lloyd A. Dunlap, eds. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1961), 13. Scripps never disclosed what Lincoln said concerning his ancestry, but Scripps wrote of Nancy Hanks Lincoln: "Facts in the possession of the writer have impressed him with the belief that, although of but limited education, she was a woman of great native strength of intellect and force of character; and he suspects that those admirable qualities of head and heart which characterize her distinguished son are inherited mostly from her." Ibid., 31. Modern editors added a snippy note. "The practice of belittling Thomas Lincoln continued for many years. Only recently has he been established as a man at least as industrious and successful as most of his neighbors." Ibid. They missed the point: Scripps had somewhere picked up a thought, most likely from Lincoln himself, that closely resembled Lincoln's reported statement to Herndon.

6. *Herndon's Lincoln*, 1:ix.

7. Benjamin P. Thomas, *Portrait for Posterity: Lincoln and his Biographers* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1947), 112-18.

8. Woodrow Wilson, *Division and Reunion 1829-1889* (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1893), 216.

9. John T. Morse, Jr., *Abraham Lincoln* (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1893), 1:9.

10. William E. Barton, *The Lineage of Lincoln* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1929), 83. See Barton, *The Paternity of Abraham Lincoln: Was He the Son of Thomas Lincoln?* (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1924).

11. Louis Austin Warren, *Lincoln's Parentage & Childhood: A History of the Kentucky Lincolns Supported by Documentary Evidence* (New York and London: The Century Co., 1926).

12. Roy P. Basler, Marion Dolores Pratt, and Lloyd A. Dunlap, eds., *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1953-55), 1:456.

13. Ibid. 3:511; 4:61. A stray comma disappeared between the first and second use of the phrase, but the word "literally" retained its double "t."

14. Ibid.

15. Statement of Mrs. Thomas Lincoln, 8 Sept. 1865, Hertz, *Hidden Lincoln*, 351.
16. Lincoln, *Works*, 3:511. In the original document, the phrase about "second families" is interlineated, indicating that Lincoln may not have written it immediately after labeling the families "undistinguished." Facsimile in Ward Hill Lamon, *Recollections of Abraham Lincoln 1847-1865* (Chicago: A. C. McClurg and Company, 1895), between 10-11.
17. Barton, *Lineage of Lincoln*, 102, 127.
18. Lincoln, *Works*, 3:511.
19. Copy of Dennis F. Hanks statement, 1877, Robert Todd Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress, 41699. "The Hanks were a peculiar people—not chaste—" David Turnham to Herndon, 15 Sept. 1865, Herndon-Weik Collection, Library of Congress. Herndon wrote that Lincoln said "that his relations were *lascivious, lecherous*, not to be trusted." Herndon to Ward Hill Lamon, 25 Feb. 1870, Hertz, *Hidden Lincoln*, 63. Herndon later returned to this subject. "The Hanks family are or were a lecherous family—a family low even among the poor whites of the South. Lincoln as a matter of course knew all about them. This hurt Lincoln in the extreme being very sensitive. I was careful never to say Hanks in his presence. . . . I never dared to ask him any question about the Hanks family . . ." Herndon to James H. Wilson, 1, 15 Oct. 1889, Herndon-Weik Collection, Library of Congress. See Reinhard H. Luthin, *The Real Abraham Lincoln* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1960), 142. Herndon's increasingly obsessive desire to prove Lincoln's illegitimacy as well as that of his mother undoubtedly influenced these remarks about the Hanks family. See David Donald, *Lincoln's Herndon* (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1948), 307-9.
20. Lincoln dated the death of his grandfather about 1784. Lincoln, *Works*, 1:456; 3:511; 4:37, 61, 117. Other evidence places the event in 1786 or 1788. Albert J. Beveridge, *Abraham Lincoln 1809-1858* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1928), 1:11; Warren, *Lincoln's Parentage & Childhood*, 11.
21. Lincoln, *Works*, 4:61.
22. Thomas L. Purvis, "The Making of a Myth: Abraham Lincoln's Family Background in the Perspective of Jacksonian Politics," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* LXXV (Summer 1982): 149-60, argues that Lincoln exaggerated his humble origins for political effect, ignoring prosperous and office-holding relatives. In this gentrification of the Lincoln family, the word "Hanks" does not appear.
23. Communication to the People of Sangamo County, 9 March 1832, Lincoln, *Works*, 1:8-9.
24. Eulogy on Henry Clay, 6 July 1852, *ibid.* 2:121.

25. F. B. Carpenter, *Six Months at the White House with Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Hurd and Houghton, 1867), 123.
26. Lincoln, *Works*, 4:61-62.
27. Dennis F. Hanks, in a statement of 13 June 1865, denied that the Lincolns moved to Indiana because of slavery. Hertz, *Hidden Lincoln*, 275.
28. O. M. Mather, "Thomas Lincoln's Accounts with Elizabethtown Merchants," *Register of the Kentucky State Historical Society* 28 (Jan. 1930): 92.
29. Charles H. Coleman, "The Half-Faced Camp in Indiana—Fact or Myth?" *Abraham Lincoln Quarterly* VII (Sept. 1952): 138-46.
30. Lincoln, *Works*, 4:62.
31. Beveridge, *Lincoln*, 1:41, 61; Benjamin P. Thomas, *Abraham Lincoln: A Biography* (New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1952), 9. This statement is emphatically denied in Louis A. Warren, *Lincoln's Youth: Indiana Years . . .* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1959), 21, 221-22.
32. Leonard Swett, "Mr. Lincoln's Story of his own Life," in *Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln by Distinguished Men of his Time*, Allen Thorndike Rice, ed. (New York: North American Publishing Company, 1886), 457.
33. Warren, *Lincoln's Youth*, 205.
34. Lincoln, *Works*, 4:62. See *ibid.* 3:463.
35. Leonard Swett to Josiah H. Drummond, 27 May 1860, typescript, Herndon-Weik Collection, Library of Congress; Swett, "Lincoln's Story," 458-59.
36. Lincoln, *Works*, 4:62.
37. Henry C. Whitney, *Life of Lincoln: Lincoln the Citizen* (New York: The Baker & Taylor Company, 1908), 1:75.
38. Dennis F. Hanks quoted in Beveridge, *Lincoln*, 1:68. See David Turnham statement, 15 Sept. 1865, Herndon-Weik Collection, Library of Congress.
39. Dennis F. Hanks statement, 13 June 1865, Hertz, *Hidden Lincoln*, 280.
40. Beveridge, *Lincoln*, 1:68.
41. Dennis F. Hanks statement, 13 June 1865, Hertz, *Hidden Lincoln*, 278; Dennis Hanks interview, *Chicago Tribune*, May 30, 1885.
42. Mrs. Thomas Lincoln statement, 8 Sept. 1865, Hertz, *Hidden Lincoln*, 351; Beveridge, *Lincoln*, 1:81.
43. *Ibid.* 1:66. Hanks's son-in-law stated that "Abe's father habitually treated him with great barbarity." Ward H. Lamon, *The Life of Abraham Lincoln; From His Birth to his Inauguration as President* (Boston: James R. Osgood and Company, 1872), 40.
44. Ida M. Tarbell, *In the Footsteps of the Lincolns* (New York and London: Harper & Brothers, 1924), 143.
45. Hertz, *Hidden Lincoln*, 351; Beveridge, *Lincoln*, 1:71.
46. Lincoln, *Works*, 4:62.
47. The family record written by Lincoln is transcribed as "May [10]th.

18[15].” Ibid. 2:94. Johnston was born in 1810, Lincoln recorded that date, and the information was so transcribed before the pages became worn, tattered, and partly illegible. *The History of Coles County, Illinois* (Chicago: Wm. Le Baron, Jr. & Co., 1879), 423. A facsimile in *Herndon’s Lincoln*, vol. 1, between 4–5, indicates that the last digit of “1810” had flaked away in the nineteenth century. The date was also transcribed as 1810 when the page was sold at auction. Parke-Bernet Galleries Inc., Sale Number 1315, Feb. 19–20, 1952, 56. The 1830 U.S. Census for Macon County, Ill., had recorded two males between the ages of twenty and thirty (Johnston and Abraham Lincoln) in the household of Thomas Lincoln. Johnston gave his age as forty in 1850. U.S. Census, Coles County, Ill. See Marilyn G. Ames, “Lincoln’s Stepbrother: John D. Johnston,” *Lincoln Herald* 82 (Spring 1980): 302.

48. Beveridge, *Lincoln*, 1:66.

49. Hertz, *Hidden Lincoln*, 352.

50. Francis F. Browne, *The Everyday Life of Abraham Lincoln* (New York and St. Louis: H. A. Thompson Publishing Co., 1886), 214.

51. Henry C. Whitney, *Life on the Circuit with Lincoln* (Boston: Estes and Lauriat, 1892), 476. See also *ibid.*, 22–23.

52. Lincoln, *Works*, 4:63, 64.

53. *Herndon’s Lincoln*, 1:22n–23n; Warren, *Lincoln’s Youth*, 171; Lincoln, *Works*, 3:16.

54. Beveridge, *Lincoln*, 1:91–94.

55. Ibid. 1:92–94; Hertz, *Hidden Lincoln*, 356, 362–63.

56. Ida M. Tarbell, *The Early Life of Abraham Lincoln . . .* (New York: S. S. McClure, Limited, 1896), 75.

57. Eleanor Gridley, *The Story of Abraham Lincoln . . .* (n.p.: Juvenile Publishing Company, 1900), 97–98. A daughter of Dennis Hanks remembered her grandmother Lincoln saying that “John used to be the smartest when they were little fellows. But Abe passed him. Abe kept getting smarter all the time, and John he went just so far and stopped.” Amanda Poorman in *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, May 26, 1901.

58. Gridley, *Lincoln*, 166. A similar statement quoted in Warren, *Lincoln’s Youth*, 154, originates in the same source (Polly Richardson) discredited by Warren two pages later. See J. Edward Murr, “Lincoln in Indiana,” *Indiana Magazine of History* 14 (March 1918): 57.

59. Hertz, *Hidden Lincoln*, 347, 352, 363; Beveridge, *Lincoln*, 1:80–81; Warren, *Lincoln’s Youth*, 155. William E. Barton, *The Women Lincoln Loved* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1927), 117–66, introduces a bevy of Indiana girlfriends for Lincoln, but these and others are summarily and effectively dismissed by Warren, *Lincoln’s Youth*, 155–58.

60. Lincoln, *Works*, 1:78.
61. Ibid. 1:119.
62. A copy of a letter of Lincoln inviting John Hanks to the wedding was produced by a purported granddaughter of John Hanks. Jesse W. Weik, *The Real Lincoln: A Portrait* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company 1922), 58–59. John Hanks never mentioned an invitation in a lengthy statement prepared for Herndon. Hertz, *Hidden Lincoln*, 345–50. See Lincoln, *Works*, 8:440.
63. Ibid. 1:280.
64. H. A. Chapman to Herndon, 10 Dec. 1866, Herndon-Weik Collection, Library of Congress; Beveridge, *Lincoln*, 1:509; Ruth Painter Randall, *Mary Lincoln: Biography of a Marriage* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1953), 134–35.
65. Thomas L. D. Johnston interview, Herndon-Weik Collection, Library of Congress; Lincoln, *Works*, 2:112; Weik, *Real Lincoln*, 50–51.
66. Hertz, *Hidden Lincoln*, 87.
67. William G. Greene quoted in David C. Mearns, *The Lincoln Papers* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1948), 1:153.
68. Carl Sandburg, *Lincoln Collector: The Story of Oliver R. Barrett's Great Private Collection* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1949), 88.
69. Browne, *Everyday Life*, 84. See Gridley, *Abraham Lincoln*, 168.
70. Lincoln, *Works*, 1:262–63.
71. Ibid. 2:16.
72. Charles H. Coleman, *Abraham Lincoln and Coles County, Illinois* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1955), 30–31, 37–38, 54.
73. Sandburg, *Lincoln Collector*, 90, 92, 107.
74. Lamon, *Life of Lincoln*, 77; Coleman, *Abraham Lincoln*, 59.
75. Ibid., 66, 73.
76. Weik, *Real Lincoln*, 161; Rufus Rockwell Wilson, ed., *Uncollected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (Elmira, N.Y.: The Primavera Press, Inc., 1948), 2:623–24.
77. Harry E. Pratt, *The Personal Finances of Abraham Lincoln* (Springfield, Ill.: The Abraham Lincoln Association, 1943), 84–85.
78. Robert Todd Lincoln Collection, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. Printed in Mearns, *Lincoln Papers*, 1:179.
79. Lincoln, *Works*, 2:96–97.
80. Hans J. Morgenthau and David Hein, *Essays on Lincoln's Faith and Politics*, Volume IV (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1983), 8.
81. Hertz, *Hidden Lincoln*, 352.
82. Lincoln, *Works*, 2:108–9.
83. Ibid. 2:111.
84. Ibid.

85. Ibid. 2:113.
86. Sandburg, *Lincoln Collector*, 92-93.
87. Coleman, *Abraham Lincoln*, 145.
88. Lincoln, *Works*, 2:112.
89. 31235, Robert Todd Lincoln Collection.
90. John J. Hall to Lincoln, 18 Oct. 1864, 37368, *ibid.*
91. Coleman, *Abraham Lincoln*, 134-35.
92. Justin G. Turner and Linda Levitt Turner, *Mary Todd Lincoln: Her Life and Letters* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972), 465.
93. Coleman, *Abraham Lincoln*, 138-39.
94. J. W. Wartmann to William H. Herndon, 21 July 1865, Herndon-Weik Collection, Library of Congress.
95. *Herndon's Lincoln*, 1:1.
96. Hertz, *Hidden Lincoln*, 44-45; Lamon, *Life of Lincoln*, 495; Weik, *Real Lincoln*, 50.
97. John Hanks statement, Hertz, *Hidden Lincoln*, 345; Dennis F. Hanks statement, 13 June 1865, *ibid.*, 276; Beveridge, *Lincoln*, 1:66.
98. Speech at Peoria, 16 Oct. 1854, Lincoln, *Works*, 2:267; debate at Alton, 15 Oct. 1858, *ibid.* 3:308. For a forty-item gathering under "Slavery, policy of the Fathers," see Archer H. Shaw, ed., *The Lincoln Encyclopedia* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1950), 324-27.
99. Don E. Fehrenbacher, *Prelude to Greatness: Lincoln in the 1850's* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1962), 71-72.
100. Lincoln, *Works*, 3:7-8, 67-68, 178, 218-19, 265-66, 286-87.
101. Ibid. 2:490-92, 512-14; 3:17-18, 82, 86, 120-21, 305-9.
102. Ibid. 4:195. See *ibid.*, 259.
103. Ibid., 269.
104. Ibid. 7:528. See *ibid.*, 512.
105. See James Hurt, "All the Living and the Dead: Lincoln's Imagery," *American Literature* 52 (Nov. 1980): 351-80; Charles B. Strozier, *Lincoln's Quest for Union: Public and Private Meanings* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1982), 50-65. Both argue that Lincoln's rejection of his father and his father's values found expression in the address to the Young Men's Lyceum, 27 Jan. 1838, but neither carries this argument to the White House as do Forgie and Anderson.
106. Lincoln, *Works*, 1:378. See *ibid.*, 367, for an earlier version with "gladden" for "sadden" in the second line, "sadness" for "pleasure" in the last line.
107. Ibid. 4:191; 6:392.
108. Carpenter, *Six Months at the White House*, 49-52.
109. Don E. Fehrenbacher, "Lincoln and the Weight of Responsibility,"

Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society LXVIII (Feb. 1975): 45-56; Roy P. Basler, "Lincoln and Shakespeare" in *A Touchstone for Greatness* (Westport, Conn. and London: Greenwood Press, Inc., 1973), 206-27. See Forgie, *Patricide in the House Divided*, 244-50; Anderson, *Abraham Lincoln*, 195-202.
110. Lincoln, *Works*, 6:392.

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